

My sincere thanks are due to Dr. A. S. Rao, Regional Botanist, Botanical Survey of India, Eastern Circle, Shillong, for critical suggestions.

BOTANICAL SURVEY OF INDIA,
EASTERN CIRCLE,
SHILLONG.
November 15, 1967.

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28. SOME INFRASPECIFIC TAXA OF THE *Panicum coloratum* L. COMPLEX

Panicum coloratum L. is a complex taxon comprising several distinct forms having chromosome numbers $2n=18, 36, 32$ and 54 (Joshi, Patil & Manchanda 1959; Patil, Vohra & Joshi 1961), which are poorly understood taxonomically and phylogenetically. The author (Jauhar 1963) studied 8 tetraploid ($2n=36$) and two hexaploid ($2n=54$) forms of this grass in considerable detail from the standpoints of morphology (both vegetative and floral), foliar epidermal patterns, chromosome behaviour during meiosis and pollen characters with a view to utilize this information for assessing precisely their taxonomic status and understanding evolutionary trends in them. From these studies it was convincingly shown that *P. coloratum* constitutes a heterogeneous assemblage, the range of variation present in it transgressing specific limits. In view of this, the 10 types of *P. coloratum* were classified into six distinct groups which are remarkably uniform within themselves and strikingly different from one another. The hexaploid group was elevated to a specific rank and named as *Panicum nehruense* Jauhar et Joshi (Jauhar & Joshi 1966).

From among the tetraploid types one was named as *Panicum simpliciflorum* Jauhar et Joshi (Jauhar & Joshi 1965) primarily on the basis of its typically simple, raceme-type panicle because it lacks some of the key characters of *Panicum coloratum* (see Jauhar 1967). The remaining four groups with $2n=36$ chromosomes have been retained under *P. coloratum* and given infraspecific ranks; they have been designated as varieties.

Some salient diagnostic features of the four varieties are described below:

***P. coloratum* var. *subglabrum* Jauhar var. nov.**

Gramen perenne, moderate altum, caespitosum, erectum, tetraploideum ($2n=4x=36$), rarius superne ramosum. Culmi 104-120 cm. alti, 5-8-nodi; nodi et partes inferiores internodorum paulum pilosi et debiliter tincti pigmento brunneo, Folia et foliorum vaginae sparse